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Tradition says they buried him on the spot, and raised a *liag*, or flag, over his *leaba*, or grave. It is plain that the district in which this monument stands got its name from *liag Cheadaich*, with the adjunct, *town*, which has been corrupted into Lickerstown, or Licketstown. As this story seems to be one of the many versions of the poem, entitled *Laigh Thaigc Mhigheach*, printed, with a translation, in the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society*, pp. 199-211, I forbear any further detail.

Immediately beside this grave, and in a north-west direction, there stood a number of upright stones (I could not learn how many), in the memory of persons still living in the neighbourhood. These stones have been all removed, but the place in which they stood is known by the name of the *burying-ground*; yet the people tell you they never discovered human bones or any other traces of sepulture than the “*head-stones*,” the term by which they designate the pillar-stones. I could not learn in what order these stones stood with respect to each other; the country people are not curious with regard to these things, but they have no tradition of a Christian place of worship having ever been connected with these “*head-stones*;” which, considered together with the absence of human remains, amounts to some degree of evidence that the stones were raised for some other purpose, probably connected with ancient Pagan rites of worship.

SOME NOTICE OF
THE FAMILY OF COWLEY OF KILKENNY.

BY JOHN G. A. PRIM.

AN attempt to trace the family history of the Cowleys of Kilkenny would, at any time, suitably occupy the attention of this Society, but owing to the circumstance that of that family the great duke of Wellington, so lately deceased, and for whose obsequies, whilst I write, the British nation makes such splendid preparation,¹ was a lineal descendant and the most distinguished representative, perhaps a more general interest may be expected for the subject at the present moment.

keeping his opponent awake, by his powers of conversation, for three nights. On the third night, in the midst of their merriment, Ceadach is said to have cried out with his habitual oath, “ ὅτι Πάτριψ τα Ὀργαν
ηα ἔσθα ἀγαν μῆτε ἀη ὅμηραςτ, ” i.e. “ by [St.] Patrick, Oscar sleeps while I am awake.” Mr. Fogarty’s measurements make the grave fifteen feet long by six feet wide,

thus disagreeing with both the Rev. Mr. Moore and Mr. Cody in this particular. Fogarty states, that when he visited the place, in August, 1851, there were three upright stones remaining, each three and a-half feet high.—Eps.

¹ This paper was read at the November meeting of the Society, whilst the duke's remains were still lying in state.

In Archdall's edition of Lodge's "Peerage," published in 1789, when the duke of Wellington was twenty years of age, the pedigree of his father, the earl of Mornington, commences with this statement:—

The family of Cowley, Cooley, or, as it is now written, Colley, derives its origin from the county of Rutland, whence they removed into Ireland in the Reign of King Henry VIII., in whose 22nd year his Majesty granted to Walter and Robert Cowley, of Kilkenny, gentlemen, during their respective lives, the office of Clerk of the Crown in Chancery.

This assertion is altogether incorrect; the date of the grant of the clerkship of the crown, instead of the 22nd, should be given as the 26th year of Henry VIII.,¹ and not only do we find some of the members of the government in the reign of Henry VIII. writing of Walter Cowley as an Irishman, and a worthy example to the other natives, but we have evidence that the family was in Ireland, and it would seem that the name occurs in Kilkenny also, at least a century before the alleged period of their removal from Rutlandshire. A list of the corporate officers of Kilkenny contained in a book formerly preserved amongst its municipal archives, but now in the possession of Sir William Betham, Ulster king at arms, states that Walter Cowley was one of the two portrieves (an office resembling that of the more modern sheriffs) of Kilkenny, in the year 1407. The record referred to was compiled from the documents in the possession of the corporation by alderman Richard Connell in the year 1693, and it is proper I should state that, having consulted the "Liber Primus," or most early of the city books now in the custody of the town clerk, I find the following entry under the date of 9th Henry IV. (1407), from which the accuracy of Connell's list may be questioned:—"Walterus *Cowlyfy* fuit prepositus infra muros Kilkennie tempore estatis." The name, Walter, it will be found, occurs frequently amongst the Cowleys of Kilkenny, but whether the portrieve of 1407 was one of that family, notwithstanding the statement of alderman Connell, who seems to have been an antiquary and herald of no mean abilities or research, cannot, I think, be positively asserted. However, as Henry VIII. did not ascend the throne till 1509, sufficient evidence can be adduced to show that during the previous century the Cowleys were in this country. In 1425, John Cowle was appointed, by an order dated at Drogheda on the 11th May, a commissioner to take up provisions for the use of James Butler earl of Ormonde and his army (*Rot. Pat.* 3 Henry IV. m. 114). In 1496, John Cowley was granted the office of guager of Ireland, during the royal pleasure² (*Rot. Pat.* 11 Henry VII. m. 2). In 1505, Robert Cowley was appointed customer of the port of Dublin (*Rot. Mem.* 20 Henry VII.); and as it appears he still filled that office in 1520

¹ The "Liber Munerum" quotes the patent as being dated January 11th, 1535.

² The family seems to have been connected with the excise from a very early

period. On the 5th of July, 1331, the king granted to Thomas Colley the office of guager of wines in England, Ireland, and Wales.—*Rot. Pat.* 20 Edward III. m. 83.

(*Rot. Mem.* 11, 12 Henry VIII. m. 6) this would appear to be the same Robert Cowley, of Kilkenny, who was appointed one of the clerks of the crown in chancery, as referred to by Lodge, and who was the first member of his family that made a figure in the politics of the times, and rose to any station of importance in the state.

From the statement of Lodge, that this family was descended from “Walter and Robert Cowley, of Kilkenny, gentlemen,” the natural inference would be, that Walter, as being first named, was the elder of the two; but such was not the case. Robert was his father, and he is given the prior place in the grants of the various public offices which they held conjointly.¹ This Robert Cowley, being a lawyer of much professional skill and ability, resident in Kilkenny, was selected by Piers earl of Ormonde as his legal adviser and agent, and having brought up his son Walter to the law also, they both enjoyed the confidence and profited by the weighty political influence of the Ormonde family, through means of whom they were gradually advanced from minor situations to important public offices. On the 11th January, 1535, they were created joint clerks of the crown in chancery, as already mentioned. In 1535, they were also conjointly appointed customers, collectors and receivers of the customs of the city and port of Dublin, for their lives, at a fee of £10 per annum. The same year Walter was granted the same office for the port of Drogheda, at a like fee. In 1537, September 7th, Walter² was elevated to the dignity of principal solicitor, or, as it is now termed, solicitor-general, of Ireland, with a fee of £10 Irish. On the 10th January, 1538, Robert was created master of the rolls; on the 7th May, 1540, he was made a commissioner for selling the lands of the dissolved abbeys, and, on the 30th September in that year, one of the keepers of the peace within the county of Meath, with power to enforce the observation of the statutes of Dublin and Kilkenny.

From the State Papers, containing the Irish correspondence during the reign of king Henry VIII., published by the English record commission, we are enabled to glean information sufficient to show that the legal and political abilities of Robert and Walter Cowley were largely employed by the Irish government and the principal

¹ Amongst the published State Papers of the reign of Henry VIII. (vol. ii. part iii. p. 311) a letter is given from Walter to Robert Cowley, which concludes as follows:—

“ Shew this letter to my said Maister, Maister Secretory, for the maters therein comprisid so requirith; and with the moost humble hart that any pore man can, I beseeche you to have me remembred to his maystertyship, whome Almighty God preserve in long honourable lif and good helthe. Written at Waterford, bound streight to Dublin, this 29 day of Aprel. Your awne

moost humble Son,
(superscribed) “ Waltier Cowley.
“ *To my good Father, Maister Robert Cowley, with all diligens.*”

² Perhaps he was the “Walter Colley” who, in the year 1544, was charged with an intrusion into the rectories of St. Michael, near Wexford, and of St. Michael, near Ballybrennan (*Rot. Mem.* 36 Hen. VIII. m. 16). I am indebted for this, and many other valuable references to the Cowley family, to the excellent custodian of the exchequer records, James F. Ferguson, Esq.

English statesmen of the period. In 1520, we have the first notice of Robert being in England, on the business of the state, and the lord deputy Surrey, in writing to cardinal Wolsey, on the 6th September in that year, to inform him that the earl of Kildare, then in London under arrest for high treason, had sent over the abbot of Monaster Evyn and William Delahide as emissaries to stir the O'Carrolls to revolt, mentions—"and the said abbot and Delahide came both to gethers out of England, and my servaunt Cowley, in oon ship, 16 days afore Ester."¹ In 1524, we have Robert Cowley again in London aiding the lord James Butler in the carrying out of some delicate political manœuvres for the earl of Ormonde, whose enemies, the Geraldines, the lord deputy was then inclined to favour; and the earl writes to his son informing him of the various representations which he wishes to be made to the king and Wolsey, which "my trusty servaunt, Robert Couly, shall penn and endite. . . . In any wise, slepe not on this matier, and if ye do, the most losses and trouble willbe yours, in tyme commyng. Immediat upon the receipt hereof, sende for Robert Couly, and cause hym to seche (seek) remedies for the same."² The Cowleys were, as in duty bound, stanch adherents of their patrons the Ormonde family in all the vicissitudes of their feud, then at its height, with the house of Kildare. In a long list of charges which the earl of Kildare preferred through lord Leonard Grey, to the king, against the earl of Ormonde, in 1525, one is—"Item, he hath used to sende over see, unto oon Robert Couly, by whome diverse untrothes have been proved, to indite complaintes, at his owne pleasure or discretion, against the said Erle of Kildare; having with hym a signet of the said Erle of Ormondes, to seal the same."³ In 1528 we have Robert Cowley corresponding with cardinal Wolsey, giving him private information as to the doings of the various Irish government officers; he is very free in offering suggestions as to the arrangements of the lord deputy and his adherents, which he considers ought to be interfered with, but his partizanship for the Ormonde family is evident throughout, and he loses no opportunity of putting in such recommendations for his patrons as the following:—"Pleas it Your Grace to be advertised, that where my Lord of Ossory, and his son, according to theire bounden duetis, attende your gracious pleasure and deliberacon concernyng the affayres of Ireland, others ryne in at the wyndow the next wey, making immediat pursuytis to the Kinges Highnes, where they obteyne all theire desiris without any stopp or stay, by means of Anthony Knevet, and others; whereof wol ensue the destruccion of Irland, without your gracious speedy redress."⁴ After the disgrace and downfall of Wolsey, both Robert and Walter Cowley kept up a constant correspondence with Cromwell, the chief minister

¹ *State Papers*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 44.

² *Id.*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 119.

³ *State Papers*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 123.

⁴ *Id.*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 140.

of the crown, and Sir Thomas Wrythesley, the king's secretary, reporting upon the condition of Ireland, and the measures of the government, but always having a favourable word to say for the earl of Ormonde. We have frequent propositions sent over under the title of "Devices of Robert Cowley, for the furtherance of the Kinges Majestes affayres in His Graces land of Irland." He enters with alacrity into the views of Cromwell respecting the suppression of monastic houses, and seeks to hasten in every way the issuing of the order for dissolving the Irish abbeys, a matter in which he was largely interested not alone as having been appointed a commissioner for setting the lands of the religious houses to tenants under the crown, but inasmuch as he had procured the farming of the manor of Holmpatrick for himself, which he held at £12 5s. 4d. per annum.¹ He subscribes his letter—"Your Lordships moost bounden Bedisman, Robert Cowley." The superscription is—"To my Lord Pryee Seales Honourable Lordship." On the 10th August, 1538, Thomas Allen writes to Cowley informing him of the death of "the Lord of Trymlettiston, late the Kingis Chancelour," mentioning that his own brother, John Allen, then master of the rolls, expects to succeed to the office, adding—"Master Cowley, if the Kingis plesur shalbe to assigne and make him Chauncelour, I know right well ye shalbe Master of the Rolles, being worthiest thereof in this land. Both he and I, onsaynedlie, shallbe as glad of your preferrement thereto, as any too lyving." The letter is addressed—"To my wurshipful friende and good Master, Master Robert Cowley."² We have seen already that Allen's anticipations were fulfilled; and soon after we have Robert Cowley signing his name to the correspondence of the Irish government, as one of the privy council.

In the mean time, Walter Cowley was pushing himself forward in Ireland, although his attachment to the Ormonde interest caused him to be no favourite with the lord deputy, Leonard Grey, who, on the 31st of October, 1536, in writing to Cromwell, complains of him, amongst others, as sowing dissensions amongst the officers of the crown; and, again, on the 24th of November in the same year, denounces "Young Cowley, Cusake, and others, which conferth together, and wolde raile and jest at their pleasures, devising how to put men in displeasures: and, as for me, yea, openly dayly at Maister

¹ Cowley, however, appears to have been a more conscientious courtier than most of those who farmed the abbey lands from the crown; having divided some of the spoil, he was willing to bear his share in the charges of the state. We find him writing thus to Cromwell, on Lady Day, 1539:—

"Sir, we bee so covetous insaciably to have so many farmes, every of us, for our singular profittes, that we have extirped and put awaye the men of warre that shuld defend the countrey: and all is like to go

wrack, except an order be takyn the rather as to have a survey, whate I and every other have in fees and fermes, and every oon that have such fees and fermes to be taxed to fynde a certaine nombre of hable men; to serve the King, and to defend the countrey, uppon great payns. . . .

Lett every of us beare his burden of sowernes with swetenes, and not to cast all the burden in the Kinges charge, to enryche our silvis."—*State Papers*, vol. iii. part iii. p. 149.

² *State Papers*, vol. iii. part iii. p. 67.

Tresorers borde, I was made theire gesting stocke.”¹ However, in 1539, three members of the privy council specially recommend Walter Cowley to Cromwell’s notice, in a report which they made to him, upon returning from a tour on which they had proceeded through “the four shires above the Barrow” for the purpose of holding sessions, collecting first-fruits, and enforcing the religious changes introduced by the king. They state that:—

Walter Cowley, the Kingis Solicitor, attending upon us this jornay, hath for his parte, right well and diligentlie set furthe the Kingis causes; so as, every of ther demeanors waid by us, we have thought we could no les do, than to commende the same to your good Lordship: for ther been so many evill in theis partis, or at least few or non given to seke knowledge and civilitie, that we be gladd to see oon of the contrary sorte, and be no les redy to incorage and set furthe soche oon in his good doingis².

He was also, on more than one occasion, despatched to England to transact weighty affairs for the Irish government, and was intrusted with the charge of treasure to be conveyed back for the king’s service in Ireland. In December, 1638, the treasure given into his care was conveyed in two hampers on horses from London to Holyhead, and thence shipped to Dalkey; the expenses of the journey being £71 15s.; and, again, on the 5th of February, 1540, he left London, having with him a sum of £2,256 for the Irish government, and accomplished a journey which now takes scarcely a day in exactly one month, arriving at Dublin on the 5th of March with his charge! During this period frequent letters were forwarded by the earl of Ormonde and his son, lord James, to the Cowleys, when in London, directing them as to representations to be made to the king and Cromwell against the Geraldines and their abettors. The earl always addressed his letters—“To my trusty servaunt, Robert Cowley, at London,” or, “To my trusty servaunt, Waltier Cowley,” except in one instance, when in addressing an epistle to them both, on the 16th July, 1538, he directs it—“To my right lovyng Counsailours, Robert Cowley and Walter Cowley, lying at Mr. Jenynges, besid the Crossid Freres, at London.” Lord James Butler, however, appears to have admitted them to greater familiarity, as he addresses his letters—“To my assurid friende, Robert Cowley, at London;” and, after his father’s death, when he himself became earl of Ormonde, in writing to the king’s secretary on the 21st Oct., 1539, he speaks of “my frende, Waltier Cowley.” Their devotion to the interests of the Butler family, however, was ultimately the cause of a temporary but serious reverse of fortune to the Cowleys. Earl James, though he wedded the daughter of the earl of Desmond, was as implacable an enemy of the Geraldines as was his father, earl Pierce, who had married the sister of the earl of Kildare; and Sir Anthony St. Leger, who succeeded to the government of Ireland after the disgrace and execution of lord Leonard Grey, having pursued the policy of his predecessor

¹ *State Papers*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 399.

² *Id.*, vol. iii. part iii. p. 116.

with respect to patronising the earl of Desmond, Robert Cowley so warmly joined the earl of Ormonde in opposing the views of the lord deputy and thwarting his plans, that an open rupture ensued. Cowley, without asking for licence to absent himself from his official duties in Ireland, repaired clandestinely to London, with the view of prejudicing the court against St. Leger, by his report of transactions in Dublin, and he wrote a letter to the king in which, amongst other matters, he charged the lord deputy with having said that Henry VII., at his first entering into England, had but a very slender title to the crown till he married queen Elizabeth. The members of the Irish privy council, however, sent over a counter-report, in which the blame was thrown on Cowley himself, and the result was that on the 6th October, 1542, the council of England committed him to the Fleet prison, having previously dismissed him from his office; and we have the king thus addressing a letter on the subject to the lord deputy and council of Ireland:—

And whereas it appeareth unto Us, that Robert Cowley, late Maister of the Rolles there, at his late reparay bither, departed out of that our Realm without the lycence of you, our Deputye, having no cause or matyr to enforce the same, but such as he might have comyted to writing, and signified at leisure, for that it plainly appeareth the same was voyd of all malice, and of no such importance as his malicious appetite desired; albeit it shalbe well doon for all men, and especially for them whiche be in auctoritie, to frame their communications uppon suche matyer, as ministre noon occasion to captious persons to judge otherwise in them then theye meane, entende, and purpose; and also it appereth that the said Cowley is a man seditious, and full of contention and disobedeyence, which is to be abhorred in any man, but chiefly in a Counsailor: We have, therefore, discharged' him of his rome and office of Maister of the Rolles there, and we conferre and yeve the same to you, Sir Thomas Cusake, not doubting, but you wool, both therein, and in all other our affayres there, serve Us according to your dieuty, and our expectacion.¹

The answer of St. Leger to the above royal dispatch is curious, not only as showing the nature of the quarrel with Cowley, but as giving us a glimpse of the policy upon which the government of Ireland was conducted at the time, being still upon the principle of *divide et impera*:—

It may also please your Majestie, that there hathe bene to me reported that the saide Mr. Cowley, late Maister of your Rolles here, shoulde article ageinst me, that I wente aboute to erecte a new Geraldine bande, menyng the same by the Erle of Desmonde; the trouthe is, I laboured mooste effectuallie to bring him to your parfaicte obedience, to my grete parill and charge; and this, gracious Lord, was the onlie cause. I sawe that, nowe the Erle of Kildare was gone, ther was no subiecte of your Majesties here mete nor habile to way with the Erle of Ormonde; who hathe, of Your Majesties gifte, and of his owne inherytance and rule, gevin him by Your Majestie, not onlie 50 or 60 myles in lengthe, but also meny of the chiefe holdes of the frontiers of Irishmen: so that if he, or any of his heires, shoulde swarve from ther diewtie of allegiance (whiche I thinke verilie that he will never do), it wolde be more harde to dante him, or theim, then it was the saide Erle of Kildare, who had alwayes the saide Erle of Ormonde in his topp, when he wolde or was like to attempte any such thinge. Therefore, I thought it good to have a Rowlande for an Olyver; for having the said Erle of Desmonde your Highness assured subiecte, it will kepe theim both in staye . . . This, as my bounden diewtie, which is to allure al men to your Majesties obeydence, was the cause, why I labored the saide Erle to the

¹ *State Papers*, vol. iii. part iii. p. 369.

same, and no zeele that I have either to Geraldyne or Butler, otherwise than may serve to the service of Your Majestie, in which I love them bothe ; for assuredlie I thinke Your Majestie hath them bothe your trew and faithfull subjectes, and I never yet harde that the Butlers offended Your Majestie, or your noble progenytors, in no poynte of rebellion, whiche is mucche to their prayse. And where, also, it hath bene reported here, that such articles, as I, with other your Counsell, sente over ageyn the said Cowley, late Maister of Your Rolles here should be conceyved ageynste him more of mallice, then of matier of trouthe ; upon the faithe and alleigence I bере to your Majestie, for my parte having the examination thereof in presence of Your Counsell, I examyned the same as indifferentlie as I would have done if the same Cowley had bene my father ; and onlie certified the trouthe, as the witnesses deposid upon their othes.¹

Robert Cowley was detained in the Fleet prison, on the charge of treasonable practices, till the 21st of July in the following year, when he was liberated on giving security not to go to Ireland without leave. From this period we have no mention of his name in any public document, and as he must have been a very old man at the time, it may be safely presumed that he did not long outlive his imprisonment and disgrace. Three years later, however, we have the old quarrel waged more fiercely than ever between the earl of Ormonde and the lord deputy ; and we find Walter Cowley, who still remained solicitor-general and clerk of the crown in chancery, taking a prominent part in the embroilment, as a partisan of the earl. The lord chancellor Allen was also at variance with St. Leger, and appears, according to the view of the editors of the “ State Papers,” to have used Cowley as a tool to give him annoyance.² In February, 1546, Robert St. Leger, the deputy’s brother, intercepted and opened certain letters written by the earl of Ormonde to the king, and the earl having indignantly denounced this act, St. Leger required the council to investigate the case, and allow him to defend himself. Lord Ormonde and Walter Cowley appeared before the council, but refused to allege anything there to St. Leger’s charge, on the ground that, he being the lord deputy’s brother, the council was not indifferent ; and the consequence was that the matter was laid before the English council. The Irish council brought strong charges against the earl of Ormonde. The archbishop of Dublin, in writing to the king, observes, “ so it is, most gracious Lorde, that here is contraversie rysyn betwene the right honorable my Lorde Deputy and my Lorde Ormonde, which if speedy remedy be not had, is like to torne to great hurte ; ye, to the totall distrucion of this your Majesties realme, and in especially your mere English subjectes.” And he denounces the earl as a dangerous person, “ more like a prince than a subject ; more like a governor than an obedient servant.”³ Whilst the deputy himself begs of the English council to free him from the troubles of his unpleasant office,

¹ *State Papers*, vol. iii. part iii. p. 379.

² Allen was unscrupulous enough to attempt to make a stalking horse of Cowley, and escape censure by throwing all the blame on him. In his defence against St. Leger’s charges he says—“ As for Cowley’s

boke [book, or schedule of charges], I take God to record, I was never of counsell wyth article of it. God is my judge, I wolde be ashamed to be named to be privy to the pennynge of so lewde a boke.”

³ *State Papers*, vol. iii. part iii. p. 557.

“ discharge me,” he prays, “ of this tedious paine, wherunto I have not bene accustomed, and I humblie beseche youe all, to be the means to the Kinges Majestie to ryd me from this hell, wherin I have remayned this 6 years ; and that some other may there serve His Majestie, as long as I have doon, and I to serve His Highnes elsewhere, where he shall commande me. Tho the same were in Turkay, I will not refuce ytt.” The various parties were ultimately called to London to have the case investigated ; and the intrigues of the earl of Ormonde’s enemies, it is generally supposed, went to the length of procuring his murder there. Poison was introduced into some of the dishes at an entertainment which he gave to thirty-five of his followers and attendants at Ely House, Holborn, and the earl and eighteen of his servants died. His faithful ally, Walter Cowley, had also the misfortune of being condemned by the council, on St. Leger’s charges, and he was committed to the Tower of London. His incarceration was, perhaps, a fortunate circumstance for him, as it probably prevented his being poisoned at the Ely House banquet. From his prison we have the poor captive writing to the council after this most humble and contrite fashion, “ I, Waltier Cowley, with as sorrowful a hart as ever any pore man can have that my Soveraine Lord shold conceiv evell demeaniure in me, do, in most humble wise, beseche His Highness, according to his Majesties accustomid clemencie, that this my plain confession and declaration may move His Excellencie, replete with pitie and mercy, to accept me to grace.” He then proceeds to an explanation of the reasons which induced him to consider the lord deputy’s policy unsound and dangerous, declaring his belief that if the earl of Ormonde’s power to serve the king as a faithful nobleman, were subverted, there would be “ a great daunger to all us there that have little land and honure, that we shold be then undone by Irish dissoobeissants in every side ; ” and he subscribes himself “ your honourable Lordship’s pore wredche in misery, Waltier Cowley.”¹ This submission by no means mollified the king and council, for they soon after issued an order for the dismissal of Cowley from his office, and appointed John Bath to be solicitor-general in his room.

At this point the record commissioners’ publication of the invaluable documents contained in the State Paper office breaks off, and I have no means of ascertaining the length of Walter Cowley’s incarceration in the tower, or how his discharge was procured ; but there is reason to suppose that his release came with the decease of the tyrant, Henry VIII., in January, 1547 (old style), and that the new government disapproved of the severity used towards him and wished to compensate him for it ; for, in a few months after Edward VI. ascended the throne, we have (according to the “ *Liber Munerum* ”) Edward, duke of Somerset, lord protector of the kingdom, writing from Windsor, under the date 13th September, 1548, signifying to

¹ *State Papers*, vol. iii. part iii. p. 578.

the lord deputy Bellyngham and the council of Ireland "that Walter Cowley is recommended to them as a worthy and necessary officer for the surveying, appraising, and extending the king's possessions and revenues in Ireland;" and a second letter on the 21st of the same month, specially directing that the salary attaching to the office should be £100 per annum—a large sum in those days. Cowley had continued to hold the appointment of clerk of the crown in chancery, to which he was originally appointed, but he now resigned that situation upon receiving the patent for the office of surveyor-general of Ireland, which he was the first to fill, and held till his death in 1551.

Robert Cowley, beside Walter, had two sons, Robert and Nicholas.¹ The former was a justice of the peace in the King's County, under the title of "Robert Colley, Esq.," having, on the 3rd February, 1562, received a grant from queen Elizabeth of lands in that county called Castletown, otherwise Young Cowleystown; but he was slain by the rebels on the 10th July, 1572,² without leaving male issue, and the property reverted to the crown. Nicholas appears to have been a merchant of Kilkenny, and he filled the office of sovereign of that municipality in the years 1540 and 1551. This Nicholas was probably the progenitor of the subsequent Cowleys of Kilkenny. Walter, the surveyor-general, was, no doubt, the head of the family, and he (according to Lodge) had two children, Henry and Walter. The first was a captain in queen Elizabeth's army, was knighted, and received a grant of Castlecarbery, in the county of Meath. From him sprang the Mornington family. Walter, the younger, was customer and collector of the port of Drogheda, but I find no further mention of him.³ The junior branch of the family which remained in Kilkenny were chiefly wealthy traders in the city, and also owned property in the county;⁴ some of them were brought up to the legal profession, and it appears from the exchequer order-book that in 1610 "Mr. Cowlie, learned in the law," was counsel for the corporation of Kilkenny, in a suit in the court of exchequer. In 1611, Mr. Rothe

¹ Patrick Colley was, in the year 1537, one of the soldiers of Dublin Castle, at a fee of 8d. per day during his life (*Rot. Mem.* 29 Hen. VIII. m. 30), and towards the end of the same century Silvester Cooley, gentleman, was, according to the "Liber Munerum," constable of Dublin Castle. These were, doubtless, members of the Cowley family of Kilkenny.

² This fact escaped Lodge and Archdall. It is here given on the authority of an exchequer Inquisition, King's County, *temp.* Elizabeth, No. 12.

³ I am inclined to think that Lodge makes a mistake in giving a son Walter to Walter the surveyor-general. We have already seen that the latter was created customs collector and receiver of the port of

Drogheda, in the year 1535, and it is probable that Lodge conceived that this was a second person of the same name. However, as this is mere conjecture on my part, I have deemed it right to give Lodge's statement, as above.

⁴ Amongst the disarranged pleadings of chancery are the records of a suit, of which the date is either 1544 or 1574, from which it appears that James Cooley, of Rostestown, county of Kilkenny, was seized of "half Donamagan, in the Rabin." This, however, is denied in the deposition of James Brenagh, who says the Butlers were seized thereof. Cooley, in his replication, declares, that James Butler conveyed said lands to Sir Thomas Lawles and Edward Eustas, to the use of Walter Cowley.

was their counsel, and Robert Bysse their attorney, but subsequently in the same year “Mr. Cowlie, the lawyer,” appeared to represent the body. In 1609, when Kilkenny received the great charter of James I., raising it to the dignity of a city, Michael Cowley was specially named in that document as one of the first aldermen. He filled the office of mayor in 1626, and must have been a man of wealth, if we may judge from the costly monument erected to him in the abbey of St. John, which bears the following inscription:—

D. Michael Cowley.

Irenarcha et Jurisconsitus, &c., et uxor eius D. Honoria Roth hic requiescant in eternam, ut speramus, hinc requiem transferendi ubi quod corruptibile est incorruptionem induet; uterque mortis subditus legi; uterque mortuus commune solvit debitum naturæ. Hæc vivere orbi desiit anno [] die mensis [] cælo ille cœpit vivere anno [].

EPITAPHIUM.

Hic virtute animi et generoso stemmate clarus,
Couleum tristis quæ capit urna tegit.
Fallor, cœlestes melior pars incolit arcæ,
Hoc tantum cineres flebile marmor habet.
Hic potuit juris discordes solvere nodos,
Sed nequuit dura solvere jura necis.
O homo vive Deo cœloque operare, sepultus,
Sola manet virtus cætera mortis erunt.
Quod alii, lector, tibi mortuo obsequium,
Rependent nobis, impende æternam
Requiem precare et vale.

The monument having been erected during his life time, leaves a blank for the date of his decease, but he was living in the year 1645, as his name is given in a list of the gentlemen of the county of Kilkenny, under the date 21st Charles I., preserved amongst the MSS. in Trinity College, Dublin (F. 3. 15).

James Cowley was mayor of Kilkenny in 1636. In 1641, Andrew Cowley, of Kilkenny, appears on the roll of representatives who sat in the supreme council of the Confederate Catholics, and he was sheriff of the city in 1642. A fragment of a monument lying at the south side of St. John's Abbey, sculptured with the Cowley arms, impaling those of Shee, and bearing in addition the initials A. C. and R. S., probably belonged to the tomb of this gentleman. At this eventful period of Irish history Luke Cowley was Roman Catholic archdeacon of Ossory, and prothonotary apostolic, and as such his name appears signed to the answers to the famous queries propounded by the supreme council to the bishop of Ossory and other divines, as to the lawfulness of the cessation of hostilities with lord Inchiquin in 1648. When the all-conquering arms of Cromwell were found irresistible by the garrison of Kilkenny in 1650, after a gallant defence they sued for and received honourable terms, sending out four gentlemen to negotiate the matter with the parliamentary general, and the first of these who signed the articles of capitulation was Ed-

ward Cowley. The family has since altogether disappeared from the county and city of Kilkenny, the last of the name whom I have been enabled to trace in the locality being James Cowley, whose will, bearing date 22nd December, 1720, is preserved in the Ossory diocesan registrar's office. He bequeaths, in the usual form, his soul to God, his body to be buried with his ancestors in the abbey of St. John, and his interest in the farms of Rathardmore and Killamory, held by him by lease from Denny Cuffe, Esq., to be sold, and the proceeds equally divided between his wife and three children, whose names are not mentioned.

In the mean time, the elder branch of the family was rising to high honours and distinctions in other counties. Henry Colley, the eldest son of Walter, the surveyor-general, though his official appointments as governor of Philipstown and a commissioner for the execution of martial law were in the King's County, Kildare, and Meath, kept up his connexion with Kilkenny, as he represented the borough of Thomastown in parliament. He was knighted and made a privy councillor by the lord deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, and for his services, military and civil, received the special commendation of several of the chief ministers of the day. He died in 1584, and the property of his eldest son, Sir George Colley of Edenderry, passed out of the family from the failure of heirs male in the next generation; but his second son, Sir Henry of Castlecarbery, had a numerous posterity: he was succeeded by his son Henry, who was succeeded by his son Dudley, whose successor was Henry, who in his turn was succeeded by another Henry, the father of Richard Colley, baron of Mornington, the father of Garret earl of Mornington, whose fifth son, born the 1st May, 1769, was the duke of Wellington. Richard Colley, the first of the family raised to the peerage, succeeded to the property of the Wesley or Wellesley family, on the death of his cousin Garret Wesley in 1728, that gentleman having made him his heir on condition of his assuming the surname and using the coat of arms of Wesley. The arms since borne by the family, in consequence, are—quarterly, first and fourth *gules*, a cross *argent*, between four saltiers of plates, for Wesley: the second and third *or*, a lion rampant *gules*, gorged with a ducal coronet proper, for Colley. Crest, on a wreath, an armed arm in pale, couped below the elbow, the hand proper, the wrist encircled with a ducal coronet *or*, holding a spear in bend, with the banner of St. George appendant, in allusion to the Wesleys having been anciently hereditary standard bearers of Ireland. The lion rampant, here used for Colley, was no part of the arms of the old Cowleys of Kilkenny; but I am informed by Sir William Betham—to whom I am indebted for much valuable information on the subject of this paper—that this bearing was specially granted to Richard Colley, from the English herald's college, upon his assumption of the name and cognizance of Wesley. The arms given for Cowley, in a heraldic manuscript in the possession of the Rev. James Graves, which seems to

have been compiled in the beginning of the last century by some native of Kilkenny, are—"gules, a chevron (by others a fess) *argent*, between three esquires' helmets." The armorial bearings on the monuments of Michael and Andrew Cowley, in the abbey of St. John, display a fess between three esquires' helmets, with the crest, a hand couped at the wrist, embowed to the dexter side. The fess, on both the shields, is charged with a crescent, as a mark of cadency, showing that the Cowleys of Kilkenny acknowledged the Colleys of Castlecarbery to be the elder branch of their house. The family motto, as given on the monuments, was "nil arma sine consilio."

Before concluding, it may, perhaps, not be considered out of place here to bring under the notice of the Society a letter which I had the honour to receive from the late duke of Wellington a short time since, in consequence of having, as one of the Honorary Secretaries, forwarded to him a prospectus of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society, at the same time taking the liberty of suggesting the connexion of his ancestors with the locality as a reason for presuming he might not be indisposed to become a member and a supporter of the institution. The document, which is very characteristic of the illustrious writer, establishes two facts, which may be considered interesting by the members—first, that the duke was unaware of his descent from the Cowleys of Kilkenny, and secondly, that in his early military career he was quartered for some time in this city:—

London, June 12, 1850.

F. M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr. Prim. He has received his letter of the 8th inst.

The Duke resides in this Country, and his public duties require his constant presence. It is not probable that he should be required to go to Ireland.

He has no knowledge of his having any relation with the City or County of Kilkenny, excepting that he resided for a short time at Kilkenny in his youth in the performance of his duty.

He feels, however, a great respect for the gentlemen of the County of Kilkenny, and it is with feelings of respect that he begs leave to decline to become a Member of their Society, which he sees no prospect that he would be able to attend.

John G. A. Prim, Esq.

It is a curious circumstance that the old infantry barrack of Kilkenny, in which the duke must have had his quarters, was erected on the site of the greater portion of the abbey of St. John, and he must have frequently trodden upon the graves of his ancestors without being aware of the interesting associations connected with the spot.¹

¹ The marquis of Ormonde, who filled the chair at the meeting of the Society at which this paper was read, stated, that from a conversation which he had had with the duke of Wellington a short time before his death, he was under the impression that the late commander-in-chief of the forces when in Kilkenny had held a staff situation, in which case he would not have been quartered at the barracks; however, his official

duties would render his frequent attendance there necessary. The duke had retained a vivid recollection of Kilkenny, and of the society of the day in the "faire cittie;" and he mentioned that it was the custom for the local gentry to assemble every evening for supper at a celebrated hotel or tavern then situated in a lane off High-street, and known as "the Hole in the Wall." "But," said the duke, "no dissipation! no dissipation!"